**Listing of Claims:**

This following listing of claims is provided for the convenience of the Examiner. No amendments are made to the claims in this paper.

1. (Previously Presented) A lamellar diffraction grating for C-band optical-telecommunication use, the lamellar diffraction grating comprising:

a substrate; and

an arrangement of generally rectangular protrusions spaced along the substrate at an average grating period a that corresponds to a line density 1/a between 700 and 1100 $mm^{-1}$, wherein an average height h and an average width w of the protrusions is such that h / a is between 0.84 and 0.96 and w / a is between 0.22 and 0.3.

2. (Original) The lamellar diffraction grating recited in claim 1 wherein the generally rectangular protrusions have substantially equal heights and have substantially equal widths.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Original) The lamellar diffraction grating recited in claim 1 wherein the grating period corresponds to a line density 1/a between 800 and 1000 protrusions/mm.

5. – 7. (Canceled).

8. (Original) The lamellar diffraction grating recited in claim 1 wherein the width of each protrusion is defined by a FWHM measurement of a profile of such protrusion.

9. (Previously Presented) A method for diffracting an optical signal having C-band optical-telecommunication wavelengths, the method comprising:

propagating the optical signal towards an arrangement of generally rectangular protrusions spaced along a substrate at an average grating period a that corresponds to a line density 1/a between 700 and 1100 $mm^{-1}$, wherein an average height h and an average width w of the protrusions is such that h / a is between 0.84 and 0.96 and w / a is between 0.22 and 0.3; and

reflecting the optical signal from the arrangement.

10. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein each of the generally rectangular protrusions has a substantially equal height and width.

11. (Canceled).

12. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein the grating period corresponds to a line density 1/a between 800 and 1000 protrusions/mm.

13. – 15. (Canceled).

16. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein the width of each protrusion is defined by a FWHM measurement of a profile of such protrusion.

17. (Previously Presented) A lamellar diffraction grating for C-band optical-telecommunication use, the lamellar diffracting grating comprising:

substrate means; and

means for reflecting an optical signal, such means for reflecting the optical signal including an arrangement of generally rectangular protrusion means spaced along the substrate means at an average grating period a that corresponds to a line density 1/a between 700 and 1100 $mm^{-1}$, wherein an average height h and an average width w of the protrusions is such that h / a is between 0.84 and 0.96 and w / a is between 0.22 and 0.3.

18. (Original) The lamellar diffraction grating recited in claim 17 wherein the grating period corresponds to a line density 1/a between 800 and 1000 protrusions/mm.

19. – 26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) A wavelength router for receiving, at an input port, light having a plurality of spectral bands and directing subsets of the spectral bands to respective ones of a plurality of output ports, the wavelength router comprising a free-space optical train disposed between the input port and the output ports providing optical paths for routing the spectral bands, the optical train including a reflective lamellar diffraction grating disposed to intercept light traveling from the input port, wherein the reflective lamellar diffraction grating has an arrangement of generally rectangular protrusions spaced along a substrate at an average grating period a, and an average height h and an average width w of the protrusions is such that h / a is between 0.84 and 0.96 and w / a is between 0.22 and 0.3.

28. (Original) The wavelength router recited in claim 27 wherein the grating period corresponds to a line density 1/a between 800 and 1000 protrusions/mm.

29. (Canceled).